United Nations S/PV.3553

Security Council

Fifticth Year

Provisional

3553rd Meeting
Wednesday, 12 July 1995, 1.05 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Martínez Blanco	(Honduras)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cárdenas
	Botswana	Mr. Outlule
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Czech Republic	Mr. Rovensky
	France	Mr. Mérimée
	Germany	Mr. Henze
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Ferrarin
	Nigeria	Mr. Gambari
	Oman	Mr. Al-Khussaiby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Sidorov
	Rwanda	Mr. Ubalijoro
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David Hannay
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

95-85681 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 1.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the representative of Croatia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Mr. Nobilo (Croatia) took places at the Council table.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*:: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1995/560, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw to the attention of the members of the Council the following revision in the text of the draft resolution (S/1995/560) in its provisional form. In paragraph 4, the word "unharmed" should be added after the word "release".

The first speaker is the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on whom I now call.

Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to wish you every success.

I should also like to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Graf zu Rantzau on his able performance during Germany's presidency of the Council.

The international community finds itself once again at yet another in the series of tragic turning points it has come to since the beginning of the unabated aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the previous cases, the choice was to go neither to the left nor to the right, and above all not to go forward. In this way, 1,177 days after the beginning of the Serbian aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, later disguised by the formation of the Pale fifth column, we are faced with the debacle of the international community's policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The failure of that policy is evinced by these figures: 200,000 dead, more than 1,200,000 expelled from their homes, and the incredibly effective "ethnic cleansing" of 70 per cent of Bosnian territory. Today, the final act of this "ethnic cleansing" is being played in Srebrenica: the brutal elimination of more than 40,000 Bosnians from the territories where they have lived for centuries, where they have been born and have died - modestly, yet proudly, not destroying, not cultivating hatred, but building and cherishing a friendly coexistence among peoples.

As an introduction to this latest blow to the United Nations mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and particularly to the safe area of Srebrenica, the strategists of the Pale regime, as they had done already in Gorazde last year, first staged an attack on an ostensibly Serbian village, and installed on this stage several actors who played survivors terrorized by alleged Muslim special forces. Naturally, the television crews and reporters were on the spot immediately, almost as in the best-organized tourist arrangements, to report it all: the ruins and the smell of smoke from the burning houses. Of course, none of the foreign press could know that this was a Bosnian village which Karadzic's hordes had "ethnically cleansed" at the beginning of the war. This method was used by Goebbels in 1939 in the Polish border city of Gliwic as a pretext for aggression on Poland. Karadzic and his new Goebbels arranged a repeat performance, which was as successful as their previous repeat performances of the Nazi concentration camps, and the rape, pillage, murder and extermination of non-Serbs in order to "cleanse" the territory for the Milosevic and Karadzic Aryan tribes.

To those familiar with the Karadzic methods, it was clear even then that Srebrenica had yet to experience its moment of greatest despair, the final strike in the three-

year siege of humiliation, deprivation and sniper and artillery terror by Karadzic's forces.

Karadzic's infamous scenario is being carried out to the letter to this very moment. New hostages have been taken, United Nations observation posts manned by brave put poorly armed Dutch peace-keepers have been stampeded over, dozens of civilians have been murdered and hundreds have been wounded in the unprotected city, some of them while they were actually in the hospital: the inevitable and, as always, the favorite target of Karadzic's artillery. An ultimatum was again issued to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was blackmailed. The world has been brazenly mocked once again by those who have continued to practise these abhorrent methods for the past 40 months.

Despite all this, some even blame the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina for so-called provocations and for violation of United Nations resolutions, thus providing a spurious semblance of an excuse or justification for the brutalities, atrocities and crimes that have paralysed the conscience of the world, which unsuccessfully attempts to grasp why and how this is still going on, how and why an internationally recognized sovereign State has been deprived of the means to defend itself, while at the same time the international community refuses, under the pretext of neutrality and impartiality, to defend it.

Has the moment come when the long and detrimental retreat before Karadzic's hordes will finally cease?

Many a chance was missed in the past. This present chance should not for any price be gambled away. The United Nations must never again permit itself to be reduced to a passive observer or, even worse, an obedient assistant to the Pale regime in their final act of "ethnic cleansing". We believe that the United Nations cannot afford any further humiliation and degradation of its mission - for which the world sent tens of thousands of its sons and daughters under the United Nations flag and spent billions of dollars for the establishment of just and lasting peace. The United Nations should not allow any new hostages to be taken as a blackmail device in the hands of Karadzic and his terrorists. Today, the Security Council is deciding not only whether Bosnia and Herzegovina will suffer yet another blow and further heavy losses, but also whether this body and the international community as a whole will take the road of rehabilitation or agree to a new defeat, and by no means the last one, a defeat that will for a long time to come marginalize the world Organization in its most important function: the maintenance of world peace and security. Should this happen, the world Organization will disappoint and embitter a large number of its Members, which, in the fate of Bosnia and Herzegovina, can recognize a dark possibility for their own plight, abandonment and deprivation.

The United Nations should give up once and for all the distorted concept of neutrality and impartiality in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those who not only advocate but brutally carry out the policy of "ethnic cleansing", national and religious superiority and the physical elimination of a people combined with the destruction of the traces of their centuries-old existence and the expropriation of their land and all other belongings, must not be treated in the same way as those who fight for religious equality, tolerance, coexistence, human rights and freedom. The terrorist and the terrorized cannot be treated in the same way. Such neutrality and impartiality lead to the development of this perverse tendency to blame the victim for the perversion and crimes of the butcher.

This neutrality, as the difficulties of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina have proved for three years and are now proving again, this time in Srebrenica, makes the murderer neither more noble nor more cooperative, and guarantees nothing less than the triumph of evil.

This is the reality which the international community must face, the turning point from which it must decide when and where to move. The Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina prefers the full rehabilitation of the mandate of UNPROFOR, and the strengthening of UNPROFOR to the point where it will become a respectable force which cannot be humiliated, degraded and mocked by every gang of road bandits. UNPROFOR must defend safe areas since this defence has, among other things, been used as a basis for the argument in favor of the maintenance of the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I would like to inform the Council of the following statement made by the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, today in Sarajevo:

> "First, we demand that the United Nations and NATO re-establish by force the violated safe zone of Srebenica within the borders it occupied before the attack, namely, of May 1993.

"Secondly, if they cannot or do not want to do this, we demand that this be publicly announced.

"Thirdly, we also request that, in any way possible, including via air drops, in cooperation with the UNHCR, tents, food and medicine be provided for the expelled population in the direction of the safe area and the wounded and sick civilians be evacuated in the opposite direction.

"Fourthly, if they cannot do this or do not want to do this, we demand that this be publicly announced."

The establishment and activation of the rapid reaction forces naturally represent a circumstance that could make a crucial contribution to the rehabilitation of the UNPROFOR mandate and UNPROFOR's capabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This, combined with NATO activities, could help to reverse the situation in the Republic.

If the choice turns out to be different, and if it would lead to the surrender of UNPROFOR and to its retreating from its obligation to protect the safe areas and to ensure the delivery of humanitarian supplies to the population — which Karadzic's terrorists had blocked throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina — then my Government will ask for a clear agreement specifying all rights and obligations during the transition period, which will enable us to alleviate the consequences of the international community's failures in our country.

It is clear that the main goals of Karadzic's terrorists are to disable UNPROFOR, to pre-empt the deployment of the rapid reaction force and any action on its part to consolidate the situation, and to once again provoke a crisis within the institutions of the international community, including the Contact Group for Bosnia.

By attacking Srebrenica and now threatening Zepa, Karadzic's and Milosevic's favourite general for doing their dirty work in other countries, Ratko Mladic, continues to realize their main goal: the elimination of the Contact Group plan and the strengthening of their own position with the goal of the legalization of the *fait accompli*. The international community has two options in Bosnia and Herzegovina, though capitulation to terrorism is no real choice for anyone who is responsible or dignified.

The Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have the privilege of choice. This must be taken into consideration when adopting today's draft resolution and any future decisions on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the kind words he addressed to me.

I now call on the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Nobilo (Croatia): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the responsible duties of presidency of the Security Council for the month of July and to wish you success in your endeavours.

The Croatian Government is extremely worried by the latest development in the six Security Council-declared safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina and extremely disturbed by the developments in Srebrenica. The decision by the Bosnian Serb leadership, with the assistance of the Belgrade authorities, to renew their advances in the safe areas and the lack of an appropriate response by the international community pose serious risks for Croatia and the Bosnian Croat federation.

The likely exodus of tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands, of Bosnian Muslim refugees from Srebrenica and the other safe areas could create serious problems for the delicate political and economic balance in the already-impoverished federation's territory. The Republic of Croatia, which already cares for close to 200,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina — more than any other Member State — and where every eleventh person is a displaced person or a refugee, is also seriously concerned about its ability to care for additional refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this light, Croatia is especially concerned about the situation in the safe area of Bihac, which is home to more than 60,000 people. The Republic of Croatia would consider the displacement of this population to be a serious threat to its internal security and therefore its citizens, and may be compelled to undertake measures to secure the status of Bihac as a safe area, if that status ever becomes threatened.

The Government and the citizens of Croatia will most certainly also have to draw additional conclusions in respect of the developments in Srebrenica and the lack of response from the international community regarding the

United Nations mandate in Croatia and the ability and willingness of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) to achieve its objectives, the control of Croatia's relevant international borders in particular.

The Croatian Government is of the firm view that the latest developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina are also a consequence of the international community's turning a blind eye to the serious increase in Serbia's interference in the occupied territories of Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This development must be reconsidered with the utmost seriousness and urgency lest the whole peace process in the region come to a tragic end.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Croatia for the kind words he addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it, in its provisional form, as orally revised. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Mérimée (France) (*interpretation from French*): The action undertaken by the Bosnian Serbs against Srebrenica marks, in our opinion, the beginning of a new and particularly serious phase. Indeed, a step has been taken in the escalation of the situation - this time, a step that is of a different nature.

Up to now, we had faced incessant violations of the status of the safe areas, but we had not yet had to confront a deliberate intention on the part of the Bosnian Serbs to use force to occupy a safe area. This is what has just been done by General Mladic's troops.

My Government fervently hopes that the Security Council will adopt the draft resolution now before us, because it takes the view that the international community can under no circumstances accept any questioning of the status of the safe areas. This is why the draft resolution calls on the Secretary-General to take all necessary steps to bring about the withdrawal of Bosnian Serb forces from Srebrenica and the return of the population.

In supporting this request, France does not wish to impose the use of any particular means. We are simply saying that we are ready, if the civilian and military authorities and the United Nations force consider it appropriate, to make troops available for any operations they regard as realistic and realizable.

We will defer to their opinion, as we believe that it is not up to the Security Council to determine in detail how the objectives it has set in the draft resolution - which I hope we are about to adopt - should be implemented. I would underscore in this respect that the plight of the civilian population and of the personnel of the United Nations Protection Force is still of primordial importance in our eyes.

We must also think about the future, which looms threateningly. Signs indicate that the Bosnian Serb forces have no intention of stopping at Srebrenica and that Zepa could be the next safe area on their list. If this is so, then a new and very dangerous situation would clearly be created, and we should draw the appropriate conclusions.

My Government has not given up on any of its objectives, at the forefront of which, I would recall, is reopening access to Sarajevo in satisfactory and secure conditions. We are ready to take any appropriate initiative to this effect.

Mr. Ferrarin (Italy): Italy is shocked and dismayed by the news that Srebrenica has been overrun by the Bosnian Serb forces. In our opinion, this event marks a major turning point in the Bosnian crisis. It constitutes a flagrant violation of the Agreement of 18 April 1993, brings grave new suffering to the already sorely tried civilian population, and unacceptably humiliates the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and the role of pacification and humanitarian assistance it is so unselfishly trying to perform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is why yesterday, in our Parliament, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Mrs. Susanna Agnelli, expressed her firm condemnation of the Bosnian Serb offensive.

In this difficult moment, I wish to express my Government's full solidarity with the UNPROFOR forces, particularly with the courageous Dutch soldiers operating in the Srebrenica territory, sharing the hardships of the civilian population they are protecting and facing overwhelmingly superior forces. They are doing so in particularly distressing psychological conditions, since a large number of their fellow soldiers are still being held hostage by the Bosnian Serbs.

In these circumstances, the Security Council cannot remain inactive. It must send a clear and firm signal to the Bosnian parties and particularly to the Bosnian Serbs. Today's draft resolution, which we support and co-sponsor, is a step in this direction and is intended to foster the presence of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which we continue to consider indispensable both for humanitarian relief and the promotion of peace negotiations. It requests the Secretary-General to use all resources available to him to restore the status of the safe area of Srebrenica. We strongly hope that this objective will be achieved by peaceful means through negotiation and persuasion.

Finally, I wish to emphasize that today's draft resolution reiterates the importance of renewed efforts to achieve an overall peaceful settlement of the Bosnian crisis. We continue to believe that the only possible solution is a political one, and that any attempt to settle the conflict by military means will only prolong it and further increase the suffering of the civilian population. In this perspective, it is an essential condition that the Bosnian Serbs accept the Contact Group's peace plan as a starting point. We hope that the international community can step up its pressure and its efforts at persuasion in this direction.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): At the outset, I should like to express the sincere appreciation of the Indonesian delegation to the sponsors of the draft resolution that is now before us. We are particularly heartened by the timely and swift manner in which this Council has been able to respond to the tragic developments in Srebrenica. Indonesia is following with grave concern the Bosnian Serbs' aggression against and occupation of Srebrenica, which has exacted a tremendous toll in human life and represents a direct challenge to the will of the international community.

The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been marked by various reprehensible acts by the Bosnian Serbs. The Indonesian delegation has consistently expressed its strong condemnation of the shelling of safe areas and population centres, the sniping at civilians, the obstruction of humanitarian relief efforts and the perpetration of "ethnic cleansing" involving, *inter alia*, the relocation of populations by force, summary executions and the destruction of homes, cultural institutions and places of worship by the Bosnian Serbs. Yet there have been occasions when the nature of their acts has been of such magnitude that it truly represents a qualitative escalation.

My delegation believes that the issue before us today constitutes such an escalation. In marked contrast to its previous actions, the Bosnian Serb army has gone beyond shelling and laying siege to the safe areas; it has now blatantly attacked and occupied the safe area of Srebrenica in direct contravention of Security Council resolutions. It also constitutes a clear violation of the Agreement for the demilitarization of Srebrenica of 18 April 1993 between the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb party. Furthermore, it illustrates the Bosnian Serbs' continued belief in the logic of war and their contemptuous rejection of all efforts to find a peaceful and comprehensive solution to the conflict. In this connection, my delegation highly commends the personnel of UNPROFOR in the safe area of Srebrenica for the courage and determination they have shown in their effort to defend safe areas while facing the much bigger military force of the Bosnian Serb army.

Every military conflict invariably brings with it untold suffering and deprivation to the civilian population, particularly to children, the elderly and the infirm. The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been no exception. The fate of the civilian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been of special concern to my delegation. We have consistently called upon the Bosnian Serb party to cease its obstruction of humanitarian relief operations and to end its disruption of the supply of basic amenities to the besieged people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this regard, we therefore view with serious concern the flood of refugees forced to flee Srebrenica as a result of the Bosnian Serb aggression. Not only has this brought to a new level the plight of an already suffering people, it is also a tragic reminder of the Bosnian Serb attempt forcibly to change the ethnic composition of the population. The international community must unreservedly condemn these violations of international humanitarian law.

Only recently, the Bosnian Serb party has demonstrated its contempt for the accepted norms and practices of international behaviour by detaining and taking as hostages UNPROFOR personnel. The Security Council reacted to this development by, *inter alia*, authorizing the strengthening of UNPROFOR with a rapid reaction capacity. Now we are witnessing the recurrence of the detention of UNPROFOR personnel by the Bosnian Serbs. The Indonesian delegation is alarmed by the most recent detention of Dutch UNPROFOR personnel by the Bosnian Serb party and finds the threat against the lives of those personnel in the event of renewed air strikes utterly reprehensible. This

development clearly poses an immediate challenge to the newly constituted rapid reaction force of UNPROFOR.

My delegation is pleased to note that many of our concerns are reflected in the draft resolution before us. The draft contains a clear demand to the Bosnian Serb forces to cease their offensive and withdraw from the safe area of Srebrenica immediately. The commitment of the Security Council to the defence of the safe areas has been clearly defined in a number of its resolutions, in particular resolution 836 (1993). Consequently, one of the principal tasks of UNPROFOR has been to protect the safe areas from armed attacks or any other hostile acts. Clearly, the latest development in Srebrenica requires a determined response by the international community.

In this regard, the Indonesian delegation would in particular like to highlight the request to the Secretary-General to use all resources available to him to restore the status of Srebrenica as defined by the Agreement of 18 April 1993 in accordance with the mandate of UNPROFOR. The international community cannot accept as a fait accompli the situation which has been brought about by the Bosnian Serbs' aggression. They must further be made to recognize that such a stance applies to all the safe areas in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nor can the international community accept any attack on or detention of UNPROFOR personnel by the Bosnian Serbs. My delegation therefore fully supports the demand contained in the draft resolution that the Bosnian Serb forces immediately and unconditionally release all detained UNPROFOR personnel.

Equally important is the demand that all parties allow unimpeded access for the UNHCR and other international humanitarian agencies to the safe area of Srebrenica for the purpose of alleviating the plight of the civilian population.

This draft resolution is a manifestation of the resolve of the international community to stand firm in the face of the continued Bosnian Serb defiance of relevant Security Council resolutions. At the same time, it underscores the importance of renewed political efforts to achieve an overall peaceful settlement to the conflict. The Indonesian delegation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Al-Khussaiby (Oman): My delegation is very grateful to the Contact Group for its initiative on this draft resolution.

It has been nearly three years since the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence and joined the United Nations, in May 1992. But since then the Bosnian Serbs' aggression has continued; in fact, it has been increasing day by day. Undoubtedly, the Serbian aggression and occupation of many parts of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina are considered not only an infringement on the sovereignty of this State but also an unprecedented breach of all the relevant Security Council[1] resolutions and the most basic societal norms, and this, in turn, poses a challenge to the will of the international community.

Once again, our Council is meeting in order to discuss another Serbian aggression. It is not a new policy for the Bosnian Serbs to kill civilians and to exercise the abhorrent "ethnic cleansing" and endanger the lives of many United Nations peace-keepers. However, the latest attack on the safe area of Srebrenica constitutes a new twist of events and an unprecedented incident which violates the status of the safe areas. This latest aggression could undoubtedly lead to a further deterioration of the situation unless the Security Council takes certain decisive actions to prevent it. The failure of the international community to deal with the Serbian aggression has resulted, and will continue to result, in further attacks by that particular group.

Thus, we believe that the international community should demonstrate that it will not accept these violations, especially those that target the safe areas and their inhabitants and the lives of the United Nations peace-keepers. In this regard, we call on the United Nations to take all necessary measures to restore the situation in Srebrenica to what it was before the Serbian attacks, in a manner that will strengthen the security of these safe areas within the territorial integrity and sovereignty and political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has a sovereign right over all its territories.

My country, Oman, considers dialogue and peaceful negotiations to be the best means of resolving any conflict in the world. On the basis of this conviction, we support all efforts exerted by the Contact Group in order to bring this conflict to a peaceful settlement. While all the parties in Bosnia have demonstrated a commitment to favour the peace option and declare their acceptance of the territorial settlement in the plan of the Contact Group, we, on the other hand, have witnessed a rejection of this peace initiative by the Bosnian Serbs. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has launched an air strike on the positions of Bosnian Serb forces in the areas, but

this unfortunately has come too late and has not stopped that group from continuing further with its plans to "ethnically cleanse" the areas and deport all people who do not have a particular ethnicity. The latest attack on the safe areas of Srebrenica is another argument that supports the call, which Oman and many other countries have supported, to allow the Bosnian Government to have all the means to defend itself in accordance with the right enshrined in Article 51 of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

We believe that the imbalance of power in the region has led the Bosnian Serbs to take advantage of this situation. Because of this, we reiterate our call on the Security Council to reconsider the unjustified arms embargo imposed on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that the people of Bosnia have demonstrated their commitment to peace and their desire to live in coexistence with their neighbours.

We believe that until the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is given the full right to exercise self-defence it is imperative for the United Nations and the Security Council to shoulder their responsibilities and to protect the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Oman condemns this latest offensive by the Bosnian Serbs on Srebrenica and calls on the international community, particularly NATO, to take all measures to secure an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Serbian forces from the safe area and the return of all its people who have fled from there. We also call on the Security Council and the United Nations to learn from lessons of the past and to prepare themselves for any future incidents of this kind, and not to take for granted the good faith of the Bosnian Serbs. We believe this is quite essential if the United Nations is to prevent incidents like those we have so far witnessed and thereby spare the lives of United Nations peace-keepers and secure the sanctity of safe areas within the mandate that it already has. We also condemn the current actions of the Bosnian Serbs, which have led to the further deployment of heavy weapons and the indiscriminate shelling of Zepa and Gorazde.

Based on our understanding that the draft resolution before us does not change anything in the existing mandate given to the United Nations and does not in any way undermine the authority the Secretary-General already has to take measures he deems appropriate with regard to the situation there, we will support this draft resolution.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): At the time of the adoption of resolution 998 (1995), on the establishment of the rapid reaction force, my delegation called the Security Council's attention to the fact that, contrary to the Secretary-General's request in his earlier report, in document S/1995/444, we had failed to clarify and clearly spell out the mandate of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, in supporting resolution 998 (1995) my delegation stated that in order for the rapid reaction force to be able to enhance UNPROFOR's capability of discharging its duties there must be a cease-fire, a cessation of hostilities, cooperation by both parties, and the intensification of the political process leading to an acceptable political settlement of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Today in Bosnia there is no peace to keep and no political will to impose one. Herein lies the dilemma of the continued involvement by the United Nations with the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fall of the safe area of Srebrenica simply adds to the dilemma and reinforces what we have all known — that is, that the phrase "safe areas" is becoming a sad misnomer. Furthermore, the detention of Dutch soldiers by the Bosnian Serbs means that history is repeating itself within a short time-frame and with tragic consequences for the civilian population. This further exposes the impotence of the United Nations under the present circumstances to protect its own personnel — not to speak of protecting innocent civilians.

In response to extremely provocative acts by the Bosnian Serbs, the pattern of United Nations responses has unfortunately been one of doing too little, and often too late.

The draft resolution before us is intended to reverse the latest of the debacles that have befallen the international community in trying to confront a determined and systematic aggressor. Whether the draft resolution contains enough strong elements and any additional political will which will finally convince the aggressor of our collective determination to draw the line remains to be seen.

None the less, this latest act of aggression by the Bosnian Serbs must not be legitimized by inaction or feeble action by the international community.

In the meantime, however, my delegation would like to emphasize the need for the rapid deployment of the rapid reaction force and also stress the need to respond urgently and adequately to the humanitarian needs of the

tens of thousands who have joined the unfortunate ranks of displaced persons and refugees.

For the thousandth time we also call for renewed diplomatic efforts to find a political solution to this tragic conflict. This appears to us now to be the international community's only remaining hope.

Finally, in supporting the draft resolution before the Security Council, my delegation would like to pay tribute to the personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and, in particular, to those deployed in Srebrenica, for their sacrifices in the cause of peace. We sincerely hope that those sacrifices will not have been in vain.

Mr. Sidorov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The delegation of the Russian Federation will vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council by a group of sponsors. Its orientation reflects our serious concern over the escalation of the Bosnian conflict that has occurred in recent days. The violation of the agreement on the cease-fire and the cessation of hostilities, the military activities undertaken earlier by the Government forces and the harsh retaliatory strikes of the Bosnian Serbs have brought their inevitable result. The logic of force has prevailed, resulting in new suffering for the civilian population, new casualties and tens of thousands of new refugees. This is precisely the scenario which is unfolding in Srebrenica.

Russia, like other members of the Security Council, strongly condemns the actions of the Bosnian Serb army in Srebrenica in violation of Security Council decisions on safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We regard as absolutely inadmissible any attacks against the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and any hostage taking from among the peace-keepers, and we demand their immediate release. We concur with the view on the need to restore the demilitarized status of the safe area of Srebrenica, which was also violated by the other side in the conflict.

Unquestionably, this task is extremely complex and should be resolved in a serious fashion. We must again note that the use of air power is not the road to a solution. Nor do not see a solution in the withdrawal of United Nations forces from Bosnia or a build-up of pressure by force, which would have serious adverse consequences, but rather in ensuring the secure and effective functioning of UNPROFOR.

We note that the draft resolution mandates the Secretary-General to use all resources available to him to restore the status as defined by the Agreement of 18 April 1993 of the safe area of Srebrenica in accordance with the mandate of UNPROFOR. It is clear that this provision precludes the option of using force which would exceed the context of the present mandate of a peace-keeping operation.

It is extremely important that any efforts to restore the safe area status not violate the impartiality of UNPROFOR and that they be fully consistent with present decision-making procedures and rules for conducting operations. We reaffirm that United Nations forces neither can nor should undertake actions which would convert them into a party to the conflict. This would jeopardize not only the operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but all United Nations peace-keeping activities.

The lesson of Srebrenica in our view is that the Security Council must finally and thoroughly deal with the problem of the very concept of safe areas and the modalities for their establishment. We fully concur with the view of the Secretary-General set out in his report of 30 May 1995 (S/1995/444) that unprovoked attacks launched from safe areas are inconsistent with the whole concept. They precipitate a disproportionate response from the Bosnian Serbs which in turn compels the Security Council time and again to extinguish one fire after another.

We concur with the conclusion of the Secretary-General that the only effective way to make safe areas truly safe is to define a regime acceptable to both parties and to promote mutual respect for the arrangements to which the parties have agreed. It is clear that the use of force will not help. The time is more than ripe to carry out the mutually agreed demilitarization of the safe areas as called for in resolution 998 (1995). We would like to hope that the Security Council will finally be able to take the right decision which should make it possible to avoid a repetition of such crises around the safe areas.

Developments in the region of Srebrenica are extremely alarming. But they must not conceal the greater overall picture of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The current trends and their development prompt serious concern because there is a clear threat of slipping into military solutions. That is why we consider it extremely important that the draft resolution stresses the importance of renewed efforts to achieve an overall

peaceful settlement and the unacceptability of any attempt to resolve the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina by military means.

We continue to believe that the only solution is a political settlement, however difficult that may be, on the basis of the proposals of the Contact Group, whose potential is far from having been exhausted.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution in document S/1995/560 in its provisional form as orally revised.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Botswana, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously, in its provisional form as orally revised, as resolution 1004 (1995).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): The international community, including every member of this Council, has been forced to address raw aggression and war crimes in the former Yugoslavia for years now. The resolution the Security Council has adopted today rightly condemns the offensive action by the Bosnian Serb forces against the safe area of Srebrenica and against personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). The resulting exodus of tens of thousands of displaced persons north to Potocari is the sole responsibility of the Pale leadership. The brazen treatment of the Dutch peace-keepers by the Bosnian Serbs is outrageous. These actions fall squarely within the jurisdiction of the war-crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The Pale leadership should understand that its aggression against Srebrenica and any future attacks against any other safe areas, notably Zepa and Gorazde, will deepen its isolation from the world community and distance it further from a settlement in Bosnia.

One of our immediate needs is to address the humanitarian crisis in the Srebrenica area. The Bosnian Serbs must comply with the Council's demand for unimpeded access to the area for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international humanitarian agencies. My Government will assist these new victims of Bosnian Serb aggression, and we encourage other Governments to work with the United Nations to meet their needs.

There is much talk today about failure: the failure of UNPROFOR, of the Security Council, of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), of the rapid-reaction force, of our respective Governments. We have all suffered a grave injury in recent days, but it is the Bosnian Serbs who have failed to comply with the most fundamental principles of international law and the legally binding demands of this Council.

In recent days the Bosnian Serbs have attacked the very core of this institution and brought more death and misery to tens of thousands of Bosnian citizens. While on the ground the Pale militia is advancing, its leaders are in full retreat from all that we stand for as an international body committed to peace and security under the rule of law.

Even as we condemn the Pale Serbs' contempt for the international community, we must acknowledge shortcomings in our efforts. The Council resolution today, which we co-sponsored, must be the beginning of credible resolve in this body, in our respective capitals and on the ground in Bosnia.

Obviously, we all prefer peaceful means, but when brutal force is used the Secretary-General must have the right to use the resources available to him, in consultation with the relevant troop contributors, as stated in this resolution, to employ our resources in the most effective manner possible to meet the humanitarian needs of so many desperate Bosnian citizens and to achieve a lasting peace. To help achieve these ends, my Government firmly believes that UNPROFOR must remain in Bosnia, supported by the rapid-reaction force.

The United Nations has made significant contributions to the welfare of the Bosnian people. UNPROFOR has a difficult mission that requires tough decisions under often intolerable conditions. The leadership of UNPROFOR will need to make even tougher decisions in the days ahead. My Government believes that the role of NATO, to which we have

committed significant resources, will be vital to those decisions in support of UNPROFOR. Also, we support full and speedy deployment of the rapid-reaction force, and we are prepared to provide necessary airlift and other logistical support for that purpose. Recent statements by many of our leaders to make the rapid-reaction force an effective instrument in support of UNPROFOR should now be implemented.

In closing, let me take this opportunity to commend the Dutch contingent formerly based in Srebrenica. The Dutch peace-keepers have set a standard for bravery and dedication to the civilians in Bosnia that will be long remembered.

Mr. Henze (Germany): Like the other members of the Security Council, Germany condemns the offensive by Bosnian Serb forces against the United Nations safe area of Srebrenica. This offensive constitutes a flagrant violation of all relevant resolutions adopted by this Council. Together with the other sponsors, we therefore put forward the resolution just adopted by this Council. It demands an immediate end to the offensive and the withdrawal of all Bosnian Serb forces from the safe area.

We are particularly concerned about the impending humanitarian disaster caused by the Bosnian Serb offensive. After months of being cut off from humanitarian deliveries because of the blockade of the safe area, large parts of the population of Srebrenica now find themselves without shelter, food and water. We welcome and support the efforts of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to bring relief to the victims of the Bosnian Serb offensive, and we demand free and unimpeded access to the area. The cease-fire apparently now agreed around Srebrenica should make this possible. However, we should be under no illusions: what we are witnessing around Srebrenica is one more case of "ethnic cleansing", which we condemn in the strongest terms.

On behalf of my Government, I would like to pay a special tribute to the Dutch contingent of UNPROFOR. The Dutch soldiers have shown great courage in carrying out their duty. They have acted in an exemplary manner to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population. Dutch soldiers have been taken hostage. We condemn this contemptible act, which is so totally at odds with any military ethic. We demand the immediate and unconditional release of the hostages.

We are extremely concerned about reports that the United Nations safe area of Zepa may be facing an offensive by Bosnian Serb forces similar to that in Srebrenica. We urgently demand that the Bosnian Serb side desist from any further aggressive act against United Nations safe areas.

The Bosnian Serbs and those who support them must know that disregard of the will of the international community comes at a cost. This behaviour puts them outside the community of civilized nations. Political and economic measures will, and have to, remain in place.

Mr. Plumbly (United Kingdom): The actions of the Bosnian Serbs over the past few days in the Srebrenica area represent the latest in a long line of failures by them to keep faith with the international community. Their actions, both in their attacks on the civilian population in Srebrenica and in their intimidation and violence against United Nations peace-keepers there, are totally unacceptable. By the adoption of this resolution, of which my Government was a sponsor, the Council has made clear its condemnation of such actions in the strongest possible terms.

Srebrenica was established as the first safe area precisely to afford protection to the civilian population by the presence of United Nations peace-keepers. The basis for this was the parties' agreement in April 1993 to a total cease-fire in the Srebrenica area and to its demilitarization. It is a matter of great regret to my Government that from the very beginning the Bosnian Serb forces violated that cease-fire repeatedly. We also regret that the demilitarization of Srebrenica was not implemented by the Bosnian Government. But let me make it clear that, whatever the excuses given by the Bosnian Serb authorities, there can be no justification whatsoever for their recent actions.

I should like to take this opportunity to pay particular tribute to the Dutch United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) personnel in Srebrenica for the bravery with which they have withstood attacks by Bosnian Serb forces which greatly outnumbered them. Attacks on United Nations peace-keepers by any party are unacceptable. We express our condolences to the Dutch Government and to the family of the Dutch soldier who gave his life.

We are now faced with an immediate humanitarian crisis in Srebrenica. Many of the people there have already been displaced from the surrounding areas owing to Bosnian Serb attacks. It is essential that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) be given immediate access to cope with these people's needs and to facilitate the departure of those who wish to leave. My Government has already offered assistance to UNHCR, and we look to the international community to play its part in dealing with this humanitarian crisis. We also look to the parties to cooperate fully.

This Council has now requested the Secretary-General to use all resources available to him to promote the restoration of the status of Srebrenica as a safe area, as agreed by the parties in April 1993. It is through demilitarization of the area that the civilian population who wish to do so will be able to remain without fear. This Council has reaffirmed that objective. We hope that UNPROFOR, acting within its mandate, can bring the parties once more to recognize that full implementation of the April 1993 Agreement represents the best way forward.

We demand that the Bosnian Serb forces, who claim to respect soldiers carrying out their duty, immediately and unconditionally release all detained UNPROFOR personnel, cooperate fully with UNPROFOR and allow full access for resupply of the Dutch contingent so that it can carry out its mandate.

We have set out the immediate priorities. But we also need to consider the wider implications of recent events. My Government fully supports the Co-Chairmen's efforts to find a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Bosnia and, in particular, the efforts of Mr. Bildt with those in the region who have a role to play in reinforcing United Nations efforts to re-establish the Srebrenica safe area.

It is essential that the parties demonstrate their readiness to return to the negotiating table to reach a political solution. It is fashionable in some areas to belittle UNPROFOR's achievements. The fact is that the United Nations, through UNPROFOR and UNHCR and together with other agencies, has saved tens of thousands of lives over the past three years. So far, the conflict, which threatened a wider Balkan war, has been contained. But by itself UNPROFOR cannot impose a peace that the parties are not prepared to accept. Nor can United Nations forces remain in Bosnia for ever. We must all recognize that continued fighting in Bosnia could put a question mark over the presence of United Nations forces, which requires a minimum level of consent from the parties.

My Government's very full support for UNPROFOR is none the less demonstrated by our decision to make troops available to form the rapid reaction force which is being deployed at this moment. We look to the authorities in the region to cooperate fully in ensuring that that deployment is completed without delay. But UNPROFOR cannot impose a settlement in the absence of the parties' willingness to negotiate.

The structure for a political solution already exists. We must recognize that negotiating time is running out.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) *(interpretation from Chinese):* The Chinese delegation is deeply concerned and disturbed by the recent aggravation of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially the further deterioration of the situation in the safe area of Srebrenica, the detention of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) personnel, the worsening of the humanitarian situation and the increase in the number of refugees. We strongly urge the parties concerned to enter into an immediate cease-fire and to stop all hostilities in Srebrenica, so as to avoid a further escalation of conflict.

The resolution that the Council has just adopted is aimed at protecting the safe area of Srebrenica and the lives and security of the civilians in the area, stopping offensives against UNPROFOR and preventing the further worsening of the humanitarian situation there. The Chinese delegation has therefore voted in favour of it.

However, we have reservations about taking enforcement action by invoking Chapter VII of the Charter, as set forth in the resolution, and we are also concerned and disturbed at the serious political and military consequences that might arise from the actions authorized in the resolution, in particular, the possibility that the peace-keeping force could thus become a party to the conflict and lose the basis of its continued existence as a result.

Here, I wish to reiterate that the Chinese delegation has all along held that only peaceful negotiation and consultation on a fair and reasonable basis can lead to a lasting solution acceptable to all to the question of the former Yugoslavia, including that of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We once again urge the parties to the conflict to cooperate with the international community and UNPROFOR and settle their dispute by peaceful means.

We also hope that the international community will step up its diplomatic and political efforts to create a favourable environment for peaceful negotiations in the

region of the former Yugoslavia and will continue to advance the process of a comprehensive political settlement of the question of the former Yugoslavia and that it will not take any action that might exacerbate tensions there.

Mr. Rovensky (Czech Republic): As this is the first time my delegation has spoken in a formal meeting of the Security Council this month I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for July.

The Czech delegation strongly condemns the offensive by the Bosnian Serb forces against the safe area of Srebrenica. During the fighting the Bosnian Serb forces occupied the town of Srebrenica, attacked with heavy weapons United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) positions and detained a number of UNPROFOR personnel. More than 20,000 civilians fled Srebrenica in the face of the Bosnian Serb onslaught, and they are now at the centre of a grave humanitarian crisis. The attack by the Bosnian Serbs against Srebrenica is totally unacceptable, and we strongly condemn it.

At the same time, we salute the brave soldiers of the Dutch battalion of UNPROFOR who, in a very courageous way, resisted the assault by overwhelming Bosnian Serb forces and who are now providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees from Srebrenica.

The significance of the Bosnian Serb attack on Srebrenica for the overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the neighbouring regions, and its impact on that situation, cannot be overestimated. This attack constitutes a grave escalation of the Bosnian conflict. For the first time, a United Nations-declared safe area has been occupied. By occupying it, the Bosnian Serbs have crossed a new and dangerous threshold. It is clear that they are testing the patience and resolve of the international community, to see how far they can push and bully with impunity.

Past experience shows that the status of the safe areas is imperfect — the whole concept is unclear — but they constitute an important part of our policy aimed at the protection of civilians affected by the terrible conflict in Bosnia.

The latest offensive by the Bosnian Serbs shows yet again that in their quest for more territory that does not belong to them, the suffering of thousands of innocent civilians has no meaning for them. The Security Council cannot ignore such an attitude. How the Council will respond to this situation is therefore of great significance.

Very rightly, the resolution that we have just adopted condemns the Bosnian Serbs for their offensive and for detaining UNPROFOR personnel. It also makes a number of demands. It demands that the Bosnian Serbs cease their offensive and immediately withdraw from Srebrenica. It demands that the Bosnian Serbs immediately and unconditionally release all detained UNPROFOR personnel.

It also makes a number of demands. It demands that the Bosnian Serbs cease their offensive and immediately withdraw from Srebrenica. It demands that the Bosnian Serbs immediately and unconditionally release all detained UNPROFOR personnel. It also demands unimpeded access to the refugees. It calls on both parties to respect the status of the safe area of Srebrenica and the agreement on the demilitarization of Srebrenica of 18 April 1993, which, regrettably, neither of the parties has respected in the past.

The demands contained in the Security Council resolution which we have just adopted are fair and should be met. However, past experience shows, and not only in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that unless our demands are underpinned by a genuine resolve and determination to see them through, they will remain unfulfilled.

The party to which today's resolution is particularly addressed knows this, and I am sure that its leaders will be very carefully assessing our response to their challenge. If today we have adopted just another resolution full of demands that will not be underpinned by our determination to see them fulfilled, then we will be doing more harm than good, not only to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina but also to the position of the Security Council. The Bosnian Serbs will be reaffirmed in their belief that Security Council resolutions are just paper tigers. They will be tempted to repeat what they did in Srebrenica in Zepa, Gorazde and other so-called safe areas, knowing that they can do so with impunity.

We believe that in the aftermath of the Bosnian Serb aggression against the safe area of Srebrenica the United Nations and its Security Council should reflect on what they want to achieve in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region as a whole, and on whether there is the necessary capability and will to see it done. If at the end of the day they come to the conclusion that their goals

cannot be achieved, either due to the lack of resources or cooperation or due to the lack of determination, they should consider other possibilities.

The attitude of the Bosnian parties has made it difficult for UNPROFOR to carry out its mandate. Of course, the bulk of the blame for this situation rests on the Bosnian Serb party, which shows absolute disrespect for human lives, as well as disrespect for the efforts of the international community, including the decisions of the Security Council aimed at ending the conflict.

In effect, UNPROFOR is being pushed in the wrong direction. Instead of being a part of the solution to the conflict, UNPROFOR is dangerously close to becoming a party to the conflict.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I thank the representative of the Czech Republic for his kind words addressed to me.

Ms. Cañas (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Argentina has witnessed the military advance by the Bosnian Serb forces on the safe area of Srebrenica with considerable concern. Faced with this very serious step in the escalation of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Security Council could not remain impassive. For this reason we support the resolution the Council has just adopted. By sending this message, we wish to make it clear that the Security Council is not ready to accept as a *fait accompli* the taking of Srebrenica, and that it fully supports the UNPROFOR forces in the field and their efforts to relieve the critical plight of the civilian population in this area. That population has once again been forced to seek a new place of refuge, and their sufferings are a matter of particularly grave concern.

My delegation categorically condemns the constraints and the attacks to which UNPROFOR personnel have been subjected and which have often resulted in their detention or death. In this context, we wish to pay a particularly warm tribute to the Dutch contingent for the extremely good job it is doing in this very difficult situation. Together with the other members of the Security Council, we call on the Bosnian Serb forces to release immediately and unconditionally all members of UNPROFOR still being held.

Srebrenica should be restored to the status agreed to by the parties in April 1993. For this reason, in the present resolution the Council has requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to this end, and we urge all the parties to cooperate in this respect. The leaders of both parties must understand that a political solution is the only option in this conflict. The suffering of their peoples and the appeals of the international community should prompt the parties to abandon the military option once and for all.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Honduras.

The delegation of Honduras views with concern the latest developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It believes that the taking of Srebrenica by the Bosnian Serb forces is a totally unacceptable act that contravenes the relevant United Nations resolutions of 1993, which conferred on Srebrenica the status of safe area. My delegation also deplores the fact that the Bosnian Serb forces, in advancing on Srebrenica, carried out attacks on UNPROFOR personnel and detained some of them.

These are deplorable events which deserve condemnation by the international community. For this reason, my delegation urges the Bosnian Serb forces to respect the status of Srebrenica as a safe area in accordance with the Agreement of 18 April 1993, to cease their offensive actions against the safe areas immediately, and immediately and unconditionally to release the UNPROFOR personnel currently detained. My delegation also appeals to the parties to do their utmost to rectify the critical situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina by means of a comprehensive and peaceful settlement, and urges them to cooperate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organizations in order to relieve the suffering of the affected civilian population.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 2.30 p.m.